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20 June 1969

OFFICE OF FINANCE INSTRUCTION NO. 52, Revised

SUBJECT : General - Financial Records Management Program

Specific - Retirement of Financial Records

RESCINDED : Office of Finance (Comptroller) Instruction No. 52,
dated 23 December 1957 and Supplement I dated
11 September 1958

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Instruction provides current guidance for the planned retirement of financial records, and for the scheduled destruction of records of temporary retention value, in conformance with the authority obtained from the Comptroller General, and the requirements of the Agency for financial documentation.

2. GENERAL

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- a. Agency policy () provides for the economical and systematic management of Agency records including their preservation, retention (for the conduct of business and for the preparation and documentation of the Office of Finance history), transfer, protection and disposal according to approved records control schedules.
- b. The primary objective of this Instruction is the orderly retirement and storage of only essential records for specific periods of time or on a permanent basis. A secondary objective is the destruction of useless, obsolete or duplicate records before retirement to the Records Center, and the establishment of realistic retention periods for material sent to the Records Center.

3. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The Records Management Officer and the Chiefs of Divisions and Staffs are responsible for implementing the Records

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GROUP I
Excluded from Automatic
Downgrading and
Declassification

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Management Program in their areas of jurisdiction. The Records Management Officer is also responsible for coordination of the Records Management Program within the Office of Finance. In addition, he will act as liaison officer between the Office of Finance and the Agency Records Administration Officer, the Agency Records Center, and other Agency facilities concerned with the management, servicing and disposition of record materials.

- b. The recently revised Records Control Schedules for each Division and Staff provide a reference and control basis for the retirement and destruction of records. Records Control Schedules will be reviewed on an annual basis. Changes in the Schedules shall be requested in writing and forwarded to the Records Management Officer through Chiefs of Divisions and Staffs. These requests will be considered at the time the Records Control Schedules are reviewed. Any questions concerning retention periods for finance records of particular interest to other Agency components, whose time requirements for retention vary from those established for the Office of Finance, shall be resolved by consultation with the Records Management Officer.
- c. Every Records Control Schedule shall include provision for endorsement by the Audit Staff evidencing agreement with the retention periods provided by the Schedule.
- d. Detailed procedures for preparation and shipment of inactive records to the Records Center are contained in a publication of the Agency Records Administration Officer. This publication is entitled, "Guide for Records Retirement," dated March 1966. Any questions concerning the shipment of records shall be referred to the Chief, OF Registry. Emphasis must be placed on careful screening of files to reduce them to only essential records for retirement. Items such as paper clips, routing slips, duplicates and other non-record material must be removed from all files prior to retirement.
- e. Volume Report of Records Destroyed - Quarterly
 - (1) A written report of the volume (see paragraph (2) below) of records destroyed in the Office of Finance under authority of the Records Control Schedule will be made by each Division and Staff Chief to the Records Management Officer not later than 15 days after the end of each quarter. This report will cover the following:

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- (a) Volume of material in linear feet or inches
 - (b) A general description of the material, i.e., subject files, reference material, couriers classified mail receipts, etc.
 - (c) The type of material (cards, correspondence, forms).
 - (d) The item number on the schedule under which the records were destroyed.
- (2) A detailed report is required only when the volume of material destroyed is approximately one-quarter linear foot (3 inches) or more. Report only that material which is actually a part of a file. Individual documents which are destroyed on a daily basis and which never become part of a file series should not be included in the report.

4. ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT

An annual statistical report of records holdings is required to measure the effectiveness of our records disposal program. In past years this report was prepared as of the end of the fiscal year. For this year the Records Administration Officer is revising the reporting requirements; therefore, this matter will be the subject of a later Office of Finance Instruction.

5. I cannot overemphasize the necessity for strictly adhering to the explicit principles of records management. Retain only what is needed, retire only materials of value, and establish realistic retention dates. Remember that storage space is costly. To retire unneeded material, improperly packed in the record container or in the wrong container is tantamount to money down the drain.

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